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his note on the order Rhipiptera, (Gen. Col. Europe, 3,419), published subsequently to my work on Classification.

I will, however, answer briefly the questions asked by Dr. Gerstaecker in the passage above cited.

The characters common to a Strepsipteron and various Coleoptera are these :
 1. Hypermetamorphosis of the larva, (Meloidæ); 2. Parasitism, (Rhipidius);
 3. Retention of the Pupa within the skin of the larva, (Lampyridæ, tribe Lycini, genus Calopteron); 4. Unfitness of anterior wings for flight, (a character also found in Orthoptera and Hemiptera, which, however, have no metamorphosis);
 5. Large development of metathoracic segment.

Even if the Stylopidae are considered as a distinct order—Strepsiptera—it will be necessary to place them immediately after the Coleoptera.

In view of the great variation of characters found in Coleoptera, it would seem rational to consider Stylopidae as an extreme and degraded form of that order, rather than to regard such a small number of objects, closely related in form, structure and habits, as an equivalent to the great orders Coleoptera, Orthoptera and Hemiptera, with which alone they can be morphologically compared, (characters 4 and 5).

The information given by Dr. Gerstaecker regarding the difference in food and manner of life between the larvæ of Meloidæ and Stylopidae, though not original, is doubtless quite interesting, but seems to imply that I had compared them together, which is not correct.

Mr. Cassin called the attention of the Academy to the collection of birds presented this evening by the Smithsonian Institution, and particularly referred to several species of great rarity and scientific value. The *Didunculus strigirostris* is one of two species of birds now known to be approaching extinction, the other species being *Alca impennis*, which is also in the Academy Museum. This bird is the most nearly allied to the extinct Dodo, formerly of the Isle of France, and inhabits the Samoan or Navigator Islands. Its extinction or approach to it is said to be owing to the introduction into those islands of the domestic cat. Not more than four or five specimens are known to be extant.

Other little known types were pointed out and exhibited to the Academy, such as *Carpophaga Auroræ*, *Carpophaga latrans*, *Artamus mentalis* and others. This interesting series is from the collection of the United States Exploring Expedition of the Vincennes and Peacock, and is presented to the Academy by the Smithsonian Institution.

March 22d.

Vice-President BRIDGES in the Chair.

Seventeen members present.

The following were presented for publication :

"Critical Remarks on the Genera *Sebastes* and *Sebastodes*," and
 "Second Contribution to the Selacology of California." By Theo. Gill.

"A Critical review of the Family Procellariidæ; Part I." By E. Coues, M. D.

"Thoughts on the Influence of Ether on the Solar System; Part IV." By Alex. Wilcocks, M. D.

March 29th.

Vice-President BRIDGES in the Chair.

Seventeen members present.

[March